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## 72-Hour Family Survival Kit

In a disaster situation, food, water and electricity can be cut off for days. By preparing emergency provisions, you can turn what could be a life-threatening situation into a manageable problem.

Typically, families should be prepared to take care of themselves for up to 72 hours after an emergency occurs. In order to do this, you must put together a "kit" containing things that are required to meet the essential needs of your family for that 72-hour period. There are six basics that should be stocked in your home:

- Water
- Food
- First Aid
- Clothing and Bedding
- Tools and Emergency Supplies
- Special Items

**Water:** One gallon of water per family member per day should be stored. A family of four should store at least 12 gallons of water. This amount should be enough for drinking, food preparation and sanitation for 72 hours. Water should be stored in plastic containers.

**Food:** A supply of non-perishable food should be stored. Keep foods in supply that require no refrigeration, cooking or preparation. Some examples are:

- Ready to eat canned meats and fish
- Fruits and vegetables
- Smoked or dried meats
- Canned or powdered milk or juice
- Peanut butter and jelly
- Crackers
- Nuts
- Health food bars
- Hard candy
- Vitamins

Food should be rotated out of the kit at least every six months.

**First Aid:** First aid kits should be kept in your home and in each vehicle. The American Red Cross can provide guidance on what each first aid kit should contain as well as provide first aid training. Some common items suggested for a basic first aid kit include:

- Sterile adhesive bandages in assorted sizes
- 2-inch and 3-inch sterile gauze pads
- Hypoallergenic adhesive tape
- Triangular bandages
- 2-inch and 3-inch roller bandages
- Scissors
- Tweezers
- Tongue blades and wooden applicator sticks
- Tube of petroleum jelly
- Assorted sizes of safety pins
- Latex gloves
- Aspirin or non-aspirin pain reliever
- Anti-diarrhea medication
- Antacid

- Needle
- Safety razor blade
- Bar of soap
- Moistened towelettes
- Antiseptic spray
- Thermometer
- Laxative
- Eye wash
- Rubbing alcohol
- Antiseptic
- Emetic (used if advised by Poison Control Center)
- Activated charcoal (used if advised by Poison Control Center)

**Clothing and Bedding:** One complete change of clothing and footwear for each family member should be included in your kit. Other items to consider are:

- Work boots
- Rain gear
- Hats
- Gloves
- Thermal underwear
- Blankets and sleeping bags

**Tools and Supplies:** Some key supplies for your 72-hour kit include:

- Battery-operated radio
- Aluminum foil
- Flashlight
- Plastic storage containers
- Extra batteries
- Paper and pencils
- Manual can opener
- Eating utensils
- Utility knife
- Cash or traveler's checks
- Fire extinguisher
- Extra set of keys for car and house
- Hand tools
- Matches
- Candles

Sanitary supplies are extremely important, such as:

- Toilet paper
- Soap or liquid detergent
- Feminine supplies
- Personal hygiene items
- Plastic garbage bags
- Disinfectant

**Special Items:** Special items are things that are unique to the needs of your family. Some examples are:

- **For Baby:** Formula, diapers, bottles and medications
- **For Adults:** Prescription medicine, contact lenses and supplies and extra eye glasses
- **Entertainment:** Games, books, magazines
- **Important Family Documents:** Copies of documents and other important information should be kept in a portable waterproof container. Some examples of these are wills, insurance policies, contracts, deeds, stocks and bonds, passports, Social Security cards, immunization records, bank account numbers, credit card numbers, inventory of valuables, important telephone numbers, birth certificates and marriage licenses.

The 72-hour kit should be as compact as possible. If you have a big family and you include all the items suggested here, the kit will be quite large. However, if items are selected and packed carefully in a duffel type bag, storage should not be difficult. Many items can be placed inside re-sealable, waterproof storage bags for extra protection.

In an emergency situation, you may have to evacuate your home quickly. Keep your 72-hour kit in a closet or other storage space that is easily accessible so you can grab the kit and go.